



# News Release

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## **Centralia motel owner ordered to fix swimming pool hazard at Rodeway Inn**

*Owner's failure to repair, replace safety barrier leads to restraining order*

**OLYMPIA** — Lewis County Superior Court has granted a temporary restraining order to the state Department of Health to force repairs to a safety fence around a local motel pool. The order compels Harwinder Singh Mattu, owner and operator of the Rodeway Inn Motel, 702 W. Harrison Ave., Centralia, to repair a broken safety barrier fence around the pool. Safety barriers are a critical part of assuring safety, particularly for young children, around swimming pools.

The Friday afternoon action follows the issuance of an emergency order on August 12 directing Mattu to immediately repair or replace the fence. The order followed site inspections and attempts by Department of Health employees to have Mattu voluntarily comply with the swimming pool safety regulations. A \$4,000 fine was also levied. Mattu hasn't yet replaced or repaired the barrier. The motel itself remains open for business.

The court order supports the department's directions to the owner to repair the existing fence, provide a new fence, drain the pool, or provide a safety cover over the pool to address this potential hazard. The concern is that a child could wander into the pool from the motel, nearby businesses, or the neighboring Rotary Riverside Park.

"Our inspections, warnings, and orders aren't getting any response from the owner," said Gary Fraser, Water Recreation Program manager. "We would much rather work with the owner to eliminate the hazard than have to work through the courts for a protective action. However, we cannot stand by and wait until some child wanders into the pool and a tragedy occurs."

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Visit the Washington Department of Health website at <http://www.doh.wa.gov> for a healthy dose of information.